

Football 153

Chapter 153 Vs St Arthur's Prep (9)

In the end, his efforts were for naught as the ball brushed past the tip of his gloves curling into the back of the net 2:3. He had given his best in order to stop that shot but in the end, he came up empty in this duel of wits and skill. He couldn't be blamed for not saving the shot though as it came at a tricky angle with the right amount of skill and power.

The saints upon seeing their number 8 convert the set-piece into a goal jumped in jubilation as they ran to celebrate with him. In the most climactic way, the game to an end as the ref blew his whistle three times shattering the morale of the Eagle's players. They had officially lost this match and there was nothing they could do about that fact.

Dejected expressions graced the faces of the Eagles players as they listlessly walked to the side-lines where their coach awaited them. They didn't lose their sense of sportsmanship for their opponents as they begrudgingly shook hands with them. Coach Bauer received them with an unreadable expression at their dugout quickly guiding them into the changing rooms.

Silence hung in the room the moment the boys entered, no one seemed to know what to say at this very moment. "Dang, what were you thinking taking down the striker in front of the box in the last minute?" Mike exclaimed with frustration and anger as he punched his locker slightly denting it.

Although he didn't mention any names everyone here knew he was talking about Ole and Damin. After all the two of them were the ones who took down the striker who had managed to slip past their line of defence. One couldn't really blame them though as any decent defender would commit a foul instead of letting their opponent have a one-on-one opportunity. However, at this moment their well-intended actions came back to bite them, and they were being further admonished for it.

"Shut up, it's not like you would have saved the shot if we let him through." Damian retorted with indignation obviously not appreciating the fact he was being blamed for simply trying his best. He plays football because he genuinely loves the game but that doesn't mean that he'll let himself be bullied.

"Let's just calm down, us arguing won't change the fact we lost," The calm voice of Ole echoed throughout the room bringing about a moment of silence. His prestige as the captain still carried some weight within his teammates causing them to subconsciously avert their eyes.

"Naw, duck that, I painstakingly helped us archive the equaliser and you ruined it, you are supposed to be our captain, not a burden." Blake's loud voice reverberated in the silent room anger easily discernible in her tone. His anger-filled words lit a match within his teammates causing an eruption of varying emotions.

"Your one to talk Mr wannabe superstar," Max retorted with obvious disdain in his voice as he glared at the striker. "You finally scored your first goal this season and started acting as if you were the alien himself," He continued speaking seemingly not forgiving the striker's actions during the match.

His anger was understandable since when the winger carried the ball forward a few times, the striker wasted his hard work. If it was only the striker missing due to bad luck he wouldn't be as enraged as he was now. However, on a few occasions, the Striker would forcefully force a shot instead of trying to assist one of his better-positioned teammates.

"Hey, don't mention my Idol Ronaldo in the same sentence as him, it's a great insult to the King of Brazilian football," Ryan commented from the side unbothered by the tension in the room but completely annoyed at the mention of his Idol. The happy-go-lucky left-back never jokes when it comes to his Idol, not even the brimming fight could allow him to ignore this insult.

"What did you say, you must be looking for a beating pipsqueak," The striker said with an ugly expression as he stepped into the wingers face personal space. He completely ignored the left-back's words choosing to not engage with him choosing instead to deal with the smaller winger. Staring at the shorter boy with a threatening glint in his eyes and a demeanour that promised physical repercussion a tension hung.

"Hahah did he just say Duck?" Rakim's laughing voice could be heard from the side seemingly amused at the striker's earlier words. His sudden question broke the building tension as a few of his teammates chuckled lightly.

"You think something is funny huh," the enraged Blake questioned Rakim making eye contact with the boy who was busy untying his laces. The winger didn't seem the slightest bit bothered with the loss and was just taking it in stride.

"You were particularly useless after that cross that led to my goal, and now you want to laugh," Blake again retorted not liking the unbothered reaction of the younger winger. Like a rabid dog, he seemed to want to bite the next person who gave him a strange look.

"We lost there's nothing more to it only trash players complain after the fact," Rakim stated with an unreadable expression. "They simply played better than us today there is nothing more to it, we weren't at our best but still gave it our all what more do you want," He continued saying as he stared at the striker still maintaining his laid-back demeanour.

His words quickly settled the raging emotions of his teammates who were already expecting a fight to break out. Another bout of silence hung in the air as all the players settled in front of their lookers ready to get changed. No one had the intention of breaking this calm silence just in case another argument broke out. However, Ryan could be seen staring daggers at Max next to him, seemingly not over the fact his idol was disgraced.

~~~

"Huh, why is it so quiet in here," Coach Bauer said as he walked through the locker room doors followed by trainer Oliver. His words weren't met with a response as the boys remained silent and averted eye contact with him.

Most of them were either staring at the floor in front of them seemingly wanting to burrow into the ground. Others acted as if they were busy tying the already-tied laces of their sneakers. Two of them even pretended to be asleep with their eyes tightly shut but the twitching of their fingers and legs easily gave them away.

Only three of his 15 players made eye contact with him, one of them was Ole his chosen captain for his natural maturity. The other was Rakim who had a laid-back attitude to the whole situation which the old coach found weird. The last person was Ben W the team's first-choice keeper who didn't get a chance to play today which explains his calmness.

"(Sigh) Heads up boys, I'm not mad about the outcome, Although we made life difficult for ourselves at some parts of the game, we fought back and showed some fighting spirit, that's all anyone can ask from you," Coach stated with a calm smile on his face as he reassured his boys on the outcome of the final score.

Before walking into the locker rooms he was genuinely debating whether to berate them and try to light a fire within them. However, when seeing their dejected expression upon entering the room, he could tell that it would be counterproductive to lecture them now. They might internalise this loss too much over the break and perform even worse when they come back.

"Let us use this break to reset and gather our strength for the second half of our season, It's one loss nothing but a speed bump which you need to quickly put behind you if you want some silverware come

May," Coach Bauer stated with an understanding tone hoping that his words would resonate with his players. It worked to some extent as a few of his player's expressions brightened up after hearing his words.

"Let's hurry up and get out of here, make sure to thank your friends and parents for their support, oh make sure you all attend the team dinner a loss is not an excuse to miss it." He finally said giving the green light for the players to scurry out of the changing room. They seemed happy after hearing his words jumping up from their seats and racing out of the door. It was almost as if they were trying to escape a massive calamity as quickly as possible.